

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 124 337

RC 009 239

AUTHOR Pickett, Lloyd C.
 TITLE Some Approaches to Development and the Indian Dilemma.
 PUB DATE Dec 72
 NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Reservation Agents' Workshop (Bozeman, Montana, May 20, 1970). Revised December 1972

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *American Indians; *Change Agents; *Culture Conflict; *Development; Economics; *Models; Politics; Reservations (Indian); *Socioeconomic Influences; Sociology; Speeches; Technology; Theories; Values

ABSTRACT

In reference to the American Indian's problem of maintaining his values while trying to participate in the economy of the larger society, the role of the change agent was explored via review of some 15 development models derived from the economic, political, sociological, and applied sciences. Included in the review were models which approached change as a phenomenon of: the advancement and diffusion of technology; social/cultural orientation; the transformations which constitute "modernization", social change in a force field; issue oriented power clusters; social action processes; linked input factors; multi-interrelated input factors; economic growth; conflict control; institutions; politics; education; an infrastructural orientation; and comprehensive development. It was concluded that all approaches were important, since socioeconomic development requires technological application, human engineering, power structure manipulation, and social action and is dependent on economic growth, conflict control, efficient institutions, modernized leaders, infrastructural development, and capital development. It was suggested that the successful change agent should be a generalist capable of stimulating an area's many agencies and individuals to make the necessary adjustments for development. (JC)

 * Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
 * materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
 * to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
 * reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
 * of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
 * via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
 * responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
 * supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *

rec 16-04-76

SOME APPROACHES TO DEVELOPMENT AND THE INDIAN DILEMMA

Dr. Lloyd C. Pickett
Supervisor of Indian Programs
Montana Cooperative Extension Service
Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana

A Presentation Made at the Reservation Agents' Workshop at Bozeman
May 20, 1970 (Revised - December 1972)

ED124337

Development, as used here, is that which we Americans commonly think of as socio-economic development. It is that which pairs human capital and natural resources with technology and labor to beget man increased control over his environment and thus increased well-being. The issue of whether such development has value will be evaded under the assumption that leaders within most, if not all, national and Reservation communities have already opted for an increased level of socio-economic development. If we can assume that these leaders represent the people, then our role as Extension workers is clearly that of change-agents laboring for those types and levels of development being requested. A number of models, or emphases for such development, will be presented here.

The modern developmentalist usually springs from one of several fields--the applied sciences, sociology, economics, or politics. He tends to emphasize the importance of theory and practice in his own academic field, often to the exclusion of other fields.

The first model presents development as the advancement and diffusion of technology. This model or approach has been widely used by the applied scientists such as agriculturalists and engineers. Here, the change-agent is seen primarily as a bearer of technology. This approach has yielded both notorious successes and notorious failures. The handful of agricultural technologists who represented the Rockefeller Foundation in Mexico after 1940 initiated an agricultural revolution. Within 28 years, the nation's wheat yields had increased by 400%. This year, two-thirds of the world will benefit by billions of dollars as a result of these men's efforts.

Yet, the advancement and diffusion of technology does not seem to be the whole answer for development, otherwise the job surely would already be finished in most areas of the world. The technologists have often been vilified, and rightly so, for their cultural blunders. They have introduced new crops which were known to be economically feasible, only to find that the people didn't like the taste of the products or the type of work they required. They have established credit institutions only to find them unused because of religious beliefs against the payment of interest. They have developed factories which soon collapsed due to untenable attitudes, beliefs, and habits of laborers.

The next model presents development as a social phenomena - one which is culture-bound. Here the change-agent is seen as a human engineer. Technology is itself seen as a social rather than a physical phenomenon because it creates and specifies new social roles. A remote villager perhaps has only three major social roles, a family role, a village role, and a religious role. If technology enters his village world, say in the form of a major factory, these roles will become drastically changed. The new technology requires education; urbanization; new views of time,

RC009239

labor, and leisure; cash markets; bureaucratic procedures; high value on productivity; competition; impersonalization; and centralized government. And the worker may now be paced by a machine, be required to move his home, to leave the extended family to set up a nuclear family. The new roles of worker; of town, regional, and national citizen; of head of a household; and many others are thrust upon him. No longer can he build up social indebtedness with his friends as a means of advancement; no longer does he have the social security of the extended family; no longer can he meet many social obligations demanded by his culture (such as dancing for three days at a wedding, because this will get him fired at his job); no longer can he blend work and leisure so that they are virtually inseparable; no longer can he work by demand only. These and many other social forces and changes descend on the head of those who would transcend from a traditional to a technological society. As is perhaps already evident, culture may demand one role set value, belief or custom, and technology another. Here is where the technologist may fail or where the human engineer needs to give the technologist an assist. Depending upon the level of technology desired, certain anti-development values, beliefs, and habits will have to be circumvented, modified, or discarded. This does not mean that indigenous cultures must be completely destroyed in order for people to benefit from technology, but certainly they will eventually be drastically modified to accommodate increasing technology. No developed nation has kept intact all of its cultural values and folk ways. The Moslem world, for example, in order to accommodate high levels of technology, is liberating its women from the veil, is accepting the use of interest on credit, and is developing mobile nuclear families. This has been very painful due to the rapid rate of change.

But do American Indians indigenously have any values, beliefs, or habits that inhibit development? I believe that they and all other traditional-culture groups do, and that we charge-agents have a major responsibility to help our Indian clients: 1. To become more fully aware of these cultural hangups (as well as of Indian cultural beauty); 2. To evaluate the cost of technology in terms of cultural and other loss; and 3. To develop individually their own unique mixed package of Indian and what we might carelessly call "modern" (technological) values and life styles. I propose that cultural conflict is largely responsible for the long and painful, unadjustive period of reservation culture. Caught in the quagmire between two, in many cases, incompatible cultures, the Indian needs help either to reach the security of the white's world, if that is his choice, or to put together a new cultural package, free of inconsistencies, wherein he can basically remain Indian and still accommodate some level of technology.

This new Indian, of which we already have numerous examples, can maintain his indigenous religion, arts, crafts, and folklore. He does not need to give up many of the excellent humanistic aspects of his culture. According to the level of technology desired, however, he must, if he has not already done so, modify his value of "Indian Wisdom" to also incorporate scientific wisdom, change his tendency to accommodate himself to nature to that of sometimes changing nature to accommodate himself, modify his tendency to share wealth to a point where he can establish the economic base necessary for an efficient business enterprise, modify his tendency to not interfere with other people to a point where he can better cope with supervisory responsibilities, modify his need for individual freedom to a point where he can accept the discipline of technology, and modify his tendency to work by demand to that of pursuing

work in general as a source of personal challenge and self fulfillment and, Tribal Chiefs (councils) with a tradition of conducting politics through affectivity (helping friends, family, etc.), must modify this old spoils system in the management of today's complex tribal business ventures and in the supervision of social program to allow professional people to function professionally.

The Indian values referred to here are those old, indigenous values which still seem to linger in the minds and habits of Indian people in varied degrees, but which are already highly modified in reservation culture. Present - day reservation culture seems to incorporate a rare combination of Indian, middle-class American, and culture-of-poverty values, attitudes, and habits.

The Indian dilemma referred to in the title of the presentation is that many Indians presently are unable to resolve the problem of wanting to maintain their humanistic and nature-centered values and life styles but at the same time wanting to share materially and to be fully accepted socially in the often contradictory larger technological society. A few seem to be asking for the full benefits of technology (equal housing, roads, education, health care, etc.) but yet are unwilling to pay the cultural price of technology. Others seem to be unwilling to admit that certain cultural changes are necessary for technology to work.

One is often able to circumvent value differences and evolve desirable changes through a proper appeal to present values. Far too little of this approach has been used. We change agents may have our own hang-ups. We often try to motivate Indians by appealing to western rather than Indian values. Donald Greve,¹ Chairman of the Board, Sequoyah Industries, Inc., found the Indians he employed in a carpet mill did not initially produce well. He decided it was because they did not believe in out-doing their fellow workers. Rather than trying to destroy this value, he worked around it. He decided that if his Indians could be highly competitive in sports then he would make a sport out of the mill work. This new approach, he reported, raised production efficiency from 35% to 97%. My plea is that we make a more concerted effort to understand our clients and then, as was done in this illustration, use their values, attitudes and beliefs in bringing about desired change. To some extent, this approach allows one to work around the Indian dilemma posed in the preceding paragraph. The price of technology in terms of cultural changes may eventually be paid but, if so, it is done rather painlessly. This approach is wide open to misrepresentation and trickery. For example, the mullahs of the Arab world originally opposed education on the grounds that it would corrupt and destroy their religion. They were eventually persuaded that educated people would add to the overall strength of Islam and some mullahs became advocates of education. I think it is now fair to say that the mullahs were tricked.

I am not arguing that the majority culture is right and that Indian culture is wrong, only that there are certain preconditions for technology to work. The human engineer approach to development would require that change agents promote as little cultural change as is absolutely necessary. Wherever it makes sense, Indian culture should

1. Donald Greve, the American Indian: Job Opportunities, Dateline, Volume 14, No. 8, May 1970.

be strengthened to avoid the disorientation, alienation and apathy that strikes those caught in rapid cultural transition. Change agents should help schools and other social institutions to use every opportunity to incorporate the compatible aspects of Indian culture into their curriculum and/or services. Only in this manner can the institutions of the majority culture hope to be relevant to minorities or hope to develop the pride and dignity of minority peoples to a point where they can function effectively in the overall society. Surely the history of institutional dealings with minorities is bleak. Happily the situation is gradually improving. Much work remains to be done, however, in changing the institutions which service Indian people and in educating non-Indians to be understanding, sensitive and appreciative of the many superior aspects of Indian culture. It is interesting to contemplate on the well being of Indian people today had they been treated in an enlightened manner from the beginning.

Where agency programs have failed, we might ask, is it because the bureaucrats have failed to be relevant, understanding, empathetic and supportive of clients as some militant people proclaim, or is it because the people-offered services (including education and jobs) are so welfare-oriented or alienated that they are unwilling to pull their share of the development load as some bureaucrats claim? Obviously it takes good intentions and hard work on the part of both agencies and clients. Development, no doubt, requires a supportive partnership which involves clients but which also puts expectations on them.

A third model portrays development as those transformations which Roland Warren² observed in the U.S.A. as it underwent modernization. He called these collectively "the great change". They included:

- (1) A division of labor.
- (2) Differentiation of interests and associations.
- (3) Increasing systematic relationships to the larger society.
- (4) Bureaucratization and impersonalization.
- (5) Transfer of functions to private enterprise and industry.
- (6) Urbanization.
- (7) Changing values.

It probably is not amiss to assume that these changes occurred because they were necessary to increasing levels of technology. For example, bureaucracy, with its impersonal but generally efficient rules and regulations, is apparently a necessity to the operation of institutions which support and normally serve as the avenues for change. I would admit that one can have too many bureaucratic rules, just as one can have too much technology or too much affluence. To follow this model, the change agent helps to accelerate specialization; develops extra-community ties with private, county, state and federal agencies and programs, and encourages growth centers and more adaptive values.

2. Roland L. Warren, *the Community in America*. Rand McNally & Co., 1963.

The fourth model depicts development as social change in a force-field. This old Kurt Lewin model assumes that any current social condition is a result of an equilibrium within a social force-field, between the driving and the restraining forces surrounding that condition. Our present low level of pollution control, Lewin would say, results from a balance between rather weak driving forces (pressures of youth, pressures of government, etc.) and rather strong restraining forces (resistance of industry, inadequate technology, fear of high prices, etc.). The change agent is a manipulator of forces. He can: (1) remove or weaken the restraining forces, (2) strengthen or add driving forces, (3) change the direction of restraining forces or (4) combine these. Following this model, change agents in primitive villages are often successful, if they possess the finesse, in manipulating various members of the village power structure, who themselves represent the major driving and restraining forces.

Promoters of the fifth model would argue that in a modern community there is no single power-structure but rather clusters of power. Around each issue, project or event, it is said there are certain people who hold power by virtue of knowledge, legitimacy and contacts with others of similar interests. Thus the change agent must identify and approach persons who make up the cluster around the issue he is concerned with, rather than approaching generalized leaders such as County Commissioners. This model is widely used in circles of government. If you want something done in the area of Consumer Protection, go to the congressman who is sponsoring a bill in this area, rather than to a congressman.

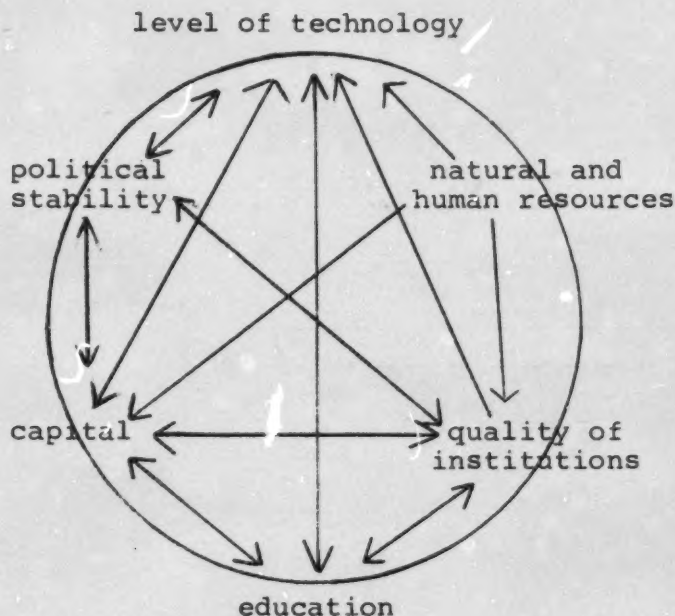
Another approach to development employs the well known "social action process" wherein the initial environment may be mapped and an actions system incepted, legitimized, expanded, and refined. Commitments to action are made, resources are mobilized, action is taken, and evaluations are made. This approach involves, or offers involvement, to the general populace. Perhaps it is widely acclaimed because it approaches, in theory, the employment of grass roots democracy and because involvement teaches and dealienates participants.

In the next, and quite inadequate, model development is portrayed as a chain of input factors which has a strength equal to that of the weakest link. This model over-simplifies the relationships between input factors.

A more adequate model represents development as a complex of multi-interrelated input factors. Here every input factor has some effect on virtually every other input factor. (See Figure 1) For example, the level of education affects institutions, the level of technology, political stability, capital, etc., and vice versa. This model implies that development inputs must be handled as a package for best results. Rather than just educating a man to be a better rancher, it implies that you should also help him to obtain the capital he needs; to legislate good laws under which to operate; to gain adequate transportation facilities; to gain access to adequate physical resources; etc. This is particularly applicable to highly under-developed areas where several inputs are simultaneously at low levels.

A diagram (Figure 1) of some of the factors and relationships operative in the interrelated factors model of development is shown on the next page. The arrows indicate the direction of influence between factors.

Figure I:



The ninth scheme depicts development from the economists viewpoint, largely as a matter of economic growth. Some Economists have a tendency to consider economics as the heart, and in some cases, as the totality of development. Broadly, their approach is to generate savings, to bring about necessary investments and to use economic incentives as the motive for change. Some pooh-poo the idea that values and beliefs, inadequate institutions, bad political situations, etc., are major hang-ups to development. With justification they point to important side effects from economic improvement and point to the fact that without economic improvement, many other desired improvements, such as high levels of education and health, cohesive family units, political stability, reduced juvenile delinquency and alcoholism, are nearly impossible. Economists are often concerned about using the pervading influence of growth centers to bring about rural development. Some would probably deny that Indian reservations can ever attain high levels of socio-economic development, if their inhabitants insist on maintaining themselves on secluded cultural and economic islands in the remote west.

We might ask whether Indian people should pursue a high level of economic development at a time when many people are asking whether our present level of life is worth the price we pay in pollution, impersonalization, and alienation. I assume, however, that virtually all American Indians need employment of some type and need to become self sustaining eventually. The reservations do not adequately offer these possibilities at this time.

The tenth approach to development emphasizes the control of conflict. Part of the problem in reservation development revolves around the conflict between Indians and whites and around political conflicts

among tribal peoples. Where these conflicts seriously inhibit development, the change agent typically tries to cross-cut the conflict issue or cleavage with new issues or cleavages which will create varied alignments on various issues. This is work primarily for politicians and high level strategists. Or conflict may be reduced by changing social rules or structure. For example, tribal politics would create less conflict if a personnel management system were instituted to isolate politicians from controlling jobs.

Institutionalists see change as occurring primarily through institutions-of-change such as government agencies and departments, professional and voluntary organizations, and to a lesser extent, schools. Institutions in under-developed countries and areas tend to be inefficient and ineffective. They tend to use procedures that worked well in the primitive state but are highly inadequate in a more modern setting. In many cases, the institutions become bogged down in out-dated bureaucratic regulations while, at the same time, a good deal of business is transacted on an individual case basis where the door is open to corruption, favoritism, nepotism, graft and inefficiency. More of the impartial, impersonal rules and regulations of modern bureaucracies are needed in this case.

Today's Indian finds himself depending largely upon the institutions of the larger society for education, employment, and other services wherein he is expected to compromise his values and life styles in order to conform to institutional expectations. Some people find themselves unable to function in such a dishonest situation. They become fearful, insecure, and alienated and eventually they drop out. Such people usually develop the habit of withdrawing in competitive situations. Here the change agent has an obligation to encourage the alienating institutions to deal with Indian people in a more enlightened manner.

Political scientists see development as a basically political phenomenon. Socio-economic development is initiated when modernizing leaders take over from traditional leaders. It is the leaders, they argue, who give impetus and direction to development and who manipulate the social and economic factors which will determine the rate of change. Thus, leaders, not technicians and educators, become the major agents-of-change.

The educators emphasize that development is accomplished through increasing a country's or area's human capital (educated people). With justification they claim that such factors as resource development, family stability, industrial development, and political stability are a function of the educational level of the people. Yet neither education nor any other input factor can stand alone as a cure-all. India has more trained people than she can employ and is not developed.

A concept rightly stressed by many in the applied sciences is that infra-structural development must be the first step in total social and economic development. The infra-structural components of electric and hydro-power, transportation, educational institutions, credit institutions and communication systems must be developed before one can really hope to bring about agricultural, industrial and social development. The many years of time and many dollars of money invested in an area's infrastructure returns little or nothing to the economy per se. It only creates new potentials for economic growth. The American public has not been well informed of this phenomenon and has tended to conclude, after many years of U.S. foreign aid, that financial assistance does not work.

A high percentage of these moneys to date has been absorbed by infra-structural developments. We must not expect any direct monetary returns from these.

The last consideration to be developed is that of whether a change agent can best work as a grass-roots worker or as a comprehensive developmentalist. There are many pros and cons within this debate. The grass-roots worker may tend to become involved in the "more symptomatic" problems which are largely unsolvable until "more primary" problems are solved. Here an agent may not be able to see the forest because of the trees. He may labor directly on juvenile delinquency, emotional problems, family breakdown or alcoholism with virtually no success. A developmentalist would tend to work on more primary aspects of development including providing jobs, value re-orientation and infra-structural development, relying heavily on side effects to solve the more symptomatic problems, or at least to make them potentially solvable. If one receives an education and obtains a job, then, freed from ignorance and poverty, he will be more receptive to other changes. Further, this back door or indirect approach to the solution of personal social problems is more acceptable to people than is a frontal attack. However, I feel that on Indian Reservations today we have far too many program administrators and initiators and far too few men in the field carrying through with programs on a person to person basis.

In conclusion, what model or approach is best? All have important implications for us. Socio-economic development does require the application of technology; it requires human engineering; it requires the manipulation of the power structure; it is speeded up by using the social action process; it is dependent upon economic growth, upon conflict control, upon efficient institutions, upon modernizing leaders, upon the development of capital, and upon infra-structural development. All are highly interrelated and, to some degree, must progress together.

No one model or approach is adequate by itself. No one discipline has all the answers. Each of us cannot be a specialized agent in all endeavors, but it is possible for each of us to be aware of the total needs of an area and to become a forceful leader in stimulating that area's many agencies and individuals to make the adjustments necessary for development. Such a generalist, if competent, deserves the high title of developmentalist. It is imperative that administrators and supervisors of development efforts play this role of overall developmentalist.